

# Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Hastings Borough Council

Electoral review

March 2016

## **Translations and other formats**

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# Summary

## Who we are

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

## Electoral review

An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed
- How many wards or electoral divisions should there be, where are their boundaries and what should they be called
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division

## Why Hastings?

The Commission is carrying out electoral reviews of the county of East Sussex and all the constituent districts. The county currently has a high level of electoral inequality, as do the districts of Hastings and Wealden. This is where some councillors represent many more or many fewer voters than others. This means that the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Hastings. Overall, 38% of wards in Hastings currently have a variance of greater than 10% from the average number of electors per councillor.

## Our proposals for Hastings

Hastings Borough Council currently has 32 councillors. Based on the evidence we received during previous phases of the review, we consider that maintaining this council size will ensure the Council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively.

## Electoral arrangements

As Hastings elects by halves, the Commission has aimed to produce a pattern of two-member wards. Our draft recommendations propose that Hastings Council's 32 members should represent 16 two-member wards. None of our proposed wards would have an electoral variance of greater than 10% from the average for Hastings by 2021.

**You have until 16 June 2016 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 14 for how to have your say.**



# 1 Introduction

1 This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Hastings Borough Council's ('the Council's') electoral arrangements to ensure that the wards provide for effective and convenient local government and that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

## What is an electoral review?

2 Our three main considerations in conducting an electoral review are set out in legislation<sup>1</sup> and are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

3 Our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Consultation

4 We wrote to the Council inviting the submission of proposals on council size. We then held a period of consultation on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

This review is being conducted as follows:

<b>Stage starts</b>	<b>Description</b>
8 September 2015	Council size decision
22 September 2015	Invitation to submit proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
1 December 2015	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
15 March 2016	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
17 June 2016	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations
20 September 2016	Publication of final recommendations

## How will the recommendations affect you?

5 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in and which other communities are in that ward. Your ward name may also change.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

6 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)

Alison Lowton

Peter Maddison QPM

Sir Tony Redmond

Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

## 2 Analysis and draft recommendations

7 Legislation<sup>2</sup> states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors<sup>3</sup> in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the date of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

8 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum.

9 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors as shown on the table below.

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2021</b>
Electorate of Hastings	59,312	66,087
Number of councillors	32	32
Average number of electors per councillor	1,854	2,065

10 Under our draft recommendations, none of our proposed wards will have electoral variances of greater than 10% from the average for the borough by 2021. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Hastings.

11 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Hastings borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. There is no evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

### Submissions received

12 See Appendix B for details of submissions received. All submissions may be inspected at our offices and can also be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

### Electorate figures

13 As prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the County Council and the five district councils worked together to produce electorate forecasts for 2021, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2016. These forecasts were broken down to polling district levels and projected an increase in the electorate of Hastings of approximately 11.4% to 2021. This growth is being driven by new

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

developments, particularly in St Leonards and the Hollington and Maze Hill areas.

14 Having considered the information provided by the Council, we are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time and these figures form the basis of our draft recommendations.

## Council size

15 The Council submitted a proposal to maintain the current council size of 32. We carefully considered the representation received. We considered that the Council's submission was supported by evidence to justify maintaining the current council size. We are content that the Council has sufficiently demonstrated that the authority can operate efficiently and effectively under this council size and ensure effective representation of local residents. We therefore invited proposals for warding arrangements based on a council size of 32.

16 We received no submissions concerning council size in response to consultation on warding patterns. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a council size of 32.

## Warding patterns

17 During consultation on warding patterns, we received a total of five submissions. These included one detailed borough-wide scheme from the Council, which was based on a council size of 32.

18 The Council's borough-wide scheme provided for a pattern of two-member wards for Hastings. The proposal was for wards that would be largely the same as the present wards, but with minor modifications all wards. None of the Council's proposed wards would have a variance outside 10% by 2021. Having carefully considered the proposals received, we were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards largely resulted in good levels of electoral equality and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries. Our draft recommendations are based on the Council's borough-wide proposals.

19 Our draft recommendations are for 16 two-member wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

20 A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements is set out in Table A1 (on pages 16–17) and on the large map accompanying this report.

21 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations. We also welcome comments on the ward names we have proposed as part of the draft recommendations.

## Draft recommendations

22 The tables on pages 8–12 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Hastings. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>4</sup> criteria of:

- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

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<sup>4</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## East Hastings

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
<b>Baird</b>	2	-2%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current Baird ward. It is bounded by the borough boundary to the north, the railway line approaching Ore station to the east, the backs of houses on Beaconsfield Road to the south and Elphinstone Road to the west.	<p>We received two submissions regarding this ward. One proposed including the parts of Baird ward west of Pine Avenue in St Helens ward. This would create a ward with a particularly high level of electoral inequality and, as such, we do not consider this to well reflect our statutory criteria.</p> <p>We consider that the boundaries for Baird ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.</p>
<b>Braybrooke</b>	2	-7%	Our draft ward is based on the current Braybrooke ward, with minor modifications to the north and west. It is bounded by St Helen's and Beaconsfield Roads to the north, the railway line to the south and east, and Summer Fields to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Braybrooke ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Castle</b>	2	-4%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current Castle ward. It is bounded by Whitefriars Road and the railway line to the north, West Hill to the east, the seafront to the south and Falaise Road to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Castle ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Conquest</b>	2	-2%	Our draft ward is based on the current Conquest ward, with	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the

			minor modifications to the west. It is bounded by the borough boundary to the north, St Helen's Wood to the east, the backs of houses on St Helen's Road to the south, and the backs of houses on Old Roar Road to the west.	boundaries for Conquest ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Old Hastings</b>	2	0%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current Old Hastings ward. It is bounded by Alfred Road to the north, Ecclesbourne Glen to the east, the seafront to the south and Bembrook Road/High Bank to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Old Hastings ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Ore</b>	2		Our draft ward is very similar to the current Ore ward. It is bounded by the borough boundary to the north and east, the seafront to the south, and Athelstan Road and Victoria Avenue in the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Ore ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>St Helens</b>	2	-3%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current St Helens ward, with the removal of a small area of housing to the south east, along Keppel Road and Blacklands Drive. The ward is bounded by the north side of St Helen's Wood, Elphinstone Road to the east, and St	We received two submissions regarding this ward. As referred to in the discussion of Baird ward, above, one respondent proposed including the area of the current Baird ward that lies west of Pine Avenue in our St Helens ward. The effect would have been to create a ward with a particularly high level of electoral inequality and, as such, we do not consider this to well reflect our statutory criteria.

			Helen's Road to the south and west.	We consider that the boundaries for St Helens ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Tressell</b>	2	-4%	Our draft ward is based on the current Tressell ward with modifications to the north, east and south. It remains bounded by the railway line to the west. The new proposed boundaries are the backs of houses on the south side of Victoria Avenue in the north of the ward, the allotments behind Old London Road to the east, and Whitefriars Road to the south.	We consider that the boundaries for Tressell ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.

### West Hastings and St Leonards

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
<b>Ashdown</b>	2	0%	Our proposed ward is very similar to the current Ashdown ward, with a modification to the south-east. It is bounded by the borough boundary to the north and west, Harrow Lane to the east and Upper Church Road, Battle Road and Queensway to the south.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Ashdown ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.

<b>Central St Leonards</b>	2	-4%	Our proposed ward is very similar to the current Central St Leonards ward. It is bounded by West Hill Road, Maze Hill and St John's Road to the north, Falaise Road to the east, the seafront to the south, and the junction of Caves Road and Grosvenor Crescent to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Central St Leonards ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Gensing</b>	2	4%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current Gensing ward. It is bounded by the backs of houses on Springfield Road to the north, Briscoe's Walk to the east, St John's Road to the south and The Green to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Gensing ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Hollington</b>	2	4%	Our draft ward is based on the current Hollington ward, with a modification to the south-east. It is bounded by the Conqueror Industrial Estate to the north, Battle Road to the east, Marline Road and Church Wood to the south, and Queensway to the west.	We received two submissions for this ward. Each provided three options for the Hollington and Wishing Tree area. Of these, we consider that the pattern of wards that includes the Robsack Wood area in Hollington ward, rather than in Wishing Tree, provide the most clearly identifiable boundaries and best represent the local community. We considered that the roads around Robsack Wood look more towards Hollington. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Maze Hill</b>	2	7%	Our draft ward is based on the current Maze Hill ward, with a modification to the north-west. It is bounded by Gillsmans Hill to the north, The Green to the	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Maze Hill ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory

			east, Maze Hill to the south and the railway line to the west.	criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Silverhill</b>	2	3%	Our draft ward is similar to the current Silverhill ward. It is bounded by Upper Church Road and Harrow Lane to the north, Coronation Wood to the east, Upper Park Road to the south and Battle Road to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for Silverhill ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>West St Leonards</b>	2	3%	Our draft ward is based on the current West St Leonards ward, with a modification to the north-east. It is bounded by Crowhurst Road to the north, the railway line to the east, the seafront to the south and the borough boundary to the west.	Other than the whole-borough scheme, we received no submissions regarding this ward. We consider that the boundaries for West St Leonards ward proposed in the whole-borough scheme provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Wishing Tree</b>	2	10%	Our draft ward is very similar to the current Wishing Tree ward. It is bounded by Marline Road to the north, Battle Road to the east, Gillsmans Hill to the south and Church Wood to the west.	Two submissions each provided three options for the Wishing Tree and Hollington area. Of these, we consider that the pattern of wards which includes the Quebec Road area in Wishing Tree, rather than in Hollington, provides the most clearly identifiable boundaries and best reflects the local community. We considered that the roads in this area are a part of the Wishing Tree community. We are therefore adopting these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.

## Conclusions

23 Table 1 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2015 and 2021 electorate figures.

**Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements**

	Draft recommendations	
	2015	2021
Number of councillors	32	32
Number of electoral wards	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	1,854	2,065
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	1	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

### **Draft recommendation**

Hastings Borough Council should comprise 32 councillors serving 16 two-member wards. The details and names are shown in Table A1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

### **Mapping**

**Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Hastings Borough Council.

**You can also view our draft recommendations for Hastings on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>**

### 3 Have your say

24 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole borough or just a part of it.

25 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Hastings, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

26 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

27 Submissions can also be made by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (Hastings)**  
**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Millbank Tower**  
**Millbank**  
**London SW1P 4QP**

The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Hastings which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively

A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government

Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?

28 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices in Millbank (London) and on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk) A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

29 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

30 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

31 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Hastings Borough Council in 2019.

## Equalities

32 This report has been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

## Appendix A

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Hastings Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ashdown	2	3,748	1,874	1%	4,129	2,065	0%
2	Baird	2	3,492	1,746	-6%	4,028	2,014	-2%
3	Braybrooke	2	3,577	1,789	-4%	3,845	1,922	-7%
4	Castle	2	3,606	1,803	-3%	3,978	1,989	-4%
5	Central St Leonards	2	3,522	1,761	-5%	3,975	1,987	-4%
6	Conquest	2	3,713	1,857	0%	4,041	2,020	-2%
7	Gensing	2	4,158	2,079	12%	4,286	2,143	4%
8	Hollington	2	3,721	1,861	0%	4,290	2,145	4%
9	Maze Hill	2	3,762	1,881	1%	4,432	2,216	7%
10	Old Hastings	2	3,779	1,890	2%	4,123	2,062	0%
11	Ore	2	3,717	1,859	0%	3,965	1,982	-4%
12	Silverhill	2	3,714	1,857	0%	4,259	2,129	3%
13	St Helens	2	3,783	1,892	2%	4,018	2,009	-3%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
14 Tressell	2	3,390	1,695	-9%	3,946	1,973	-4%
15 West St Leonards	2	3,563	1,782	-4%	4,236	2,118	3%
16 Wishing Tree	2	4,067	2,034	10%	4,537	2,268	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>59,312</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66,087</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,854</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Hastings Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

# Appendix B

## Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/east-sussex/hastings>

### **Local authority**

- Hastings Borough Council

### **Councillors**

- Cllr P. Scott (Hastings Borough Council and East Sussex County Council)

### **Residents**

- Three local residents

# Appendix C

## Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average

Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average

Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council
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